



THE FOOD, AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL MARKETS (FARM) PROJECT

Consultancy on the Organization and
Implementation of the Second Agricultural Trade
Fair and Conference of South Sudan

Contract No.: EDH-I-00-05-00005-00, Task Order 16



December 2012

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Abt Associates Inc.

Recommended Citation: Velez, Julian. "Consultancy on the Organization and Implementation of the Second Agricultural Trade Fair and Conference of South Sudan." Prepared for the Food, Agribusiness and Rural Markets (FARM) Project by Abt Associates Inc., Bethesda, MD, December 2012.



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DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared for the Food, Agribusiness and Rural Markets (FARM) Project in South Sudan as part of a technical assistance activity to assist the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Cooperatives and Rural Development and the Ministry of Animal Resources and Fisheries to organize and implement the Second Agricultural Trade Fair and Conference of South Sudan. The Consultant is grateful to the FARM project, especially Mr. David Hughes, Chief of Party, and to USAID/South Sudan, especially Ms. Erin Shutty, for their encouragement, appreciation, support, and guidance during the assignment.

ACRONYMS

COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
FARM	Food, Agriculture and Rural Markets Project
ID	Identification
MAFCRD	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Cooperatives and Rural Development
MARF	Ministry of Animal Resources and Fisheries
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
RSS	Republic of South Sudan
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I. INTRODUCTION

A. ACTIVITY BACKGROUND

The agricultural trade fairs of South Sudan were created to provide agricultural awareness within South Sudan, since agriculture has been designated by the Republic of South Sudan (RSS) to be the primary driver for economic growth in the country. Thus, the RSS, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Cooperatives and Rural Development (MAFCRD) and the Ministry of Animal Resources and Fisheries (MARF), decided to hold a Second Agriculture Trade Fair at the end of November 2012, accompanied by a conference to share and learn from agricultural development success stories in the East Africa Region.

In line with the government's mandate to enhance agricultural development, the primary objectives of the fair were to:

- Promote agricultural awareness among the South Sudanese population, including farmers, service providers, private citizens, public sector officials, and school-age children
- Create suitable agricultural linkages with national, regional, and international traders and investors
- Increase market information exchange in agriculture and other related sectors
- Expose the agricultural potential and increase trade opportunities for South Sudan
- Promote private sector development
- Promote the use of modern technologies

The justification behind these objectives is that the fair introduces South Sudan's produce to regional and international markets; exposes farmers to modern methods of production; and enables buyers and sellers to source farm inputs, services, and financing in one location. In addition, the fair fosters the development of a network of traders and investors interested in doing business in the agricultural sector of South Sudan. It also promotes knowledge exchange and interaction among participants and general visitors.

The Food, Agriculture and Rural Markets (FARM) Project, which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), assisted MAFCRD with the organization and implementation (planning, marketing, and management) of the First Agricultural Trade Fair, since MAFCRD had very little experience in the organization and implementation of such events. A short-term consultant provided by The FARM Project conducted a training workshop in June 2011 on conceptualizing, planning, and organizing an agricultural trade fair for members of MAFCRD and various government line ministries. Later, this same consultant, along with FARM project staff, helped the ministry organize, manage, and implement the First Agricultural Trade Fair, which took place November 9–12, 2011.

Seventy local and 40 international exhibitors displayed their goods and services during this first fair. The first fair had 2,500 visitors and 800 students attending. The FARM Project sponsored 213 farmers from its three service areas to participate at the fair. Upon conclusion of the fair, a final report and planning manual was prepared by The FARM Project consultant.

Products exhibited at the first fair included:

- Staple crops and horticulture
- Livestock and fisheries products (e.g., hides, skins)
- Agricultural products
- Commercial insects
- Forestry products (e.g., timber, furniture)
- Non-forestry products (e.g., shea nuts, gum arabica)
- Agricultural machinery
- Demonstrations of improved methods of production

Participants included:

- Farmers/farmer-based organizations/pastoralists
- Produce and commodity traders
- Service providers (transporters, input suppliers, agro-processing technology suppliers)
- Investors (in milling, food processing, gum arabica, textiles industry)
- Regional/Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) farmers' unions
- Wood industry technology representatives
- Institutions (research organizations, universities)
- International donors, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and partner institutions
- Agricultural lending financial institutions

The 2011 experience proved that the success of a fair depends on public awareness and on the participation of a good number of local and international exhibitors, as well as on crucial involvement by farmers. It also showed that the heart of the fair was national and international participants who attended to display goods and services to showcase new technologies and facilitate commercial interests. This helped further develop the agricultural sector of South Sudan, one of the fastest-growing markets in East Africa. The spirit of the fair was provided by farmers who attended with their products from the different states of South Sudan.



Participants at the Second Agricultural Trade Fair proudly show their award.

They showcased not only their ability to produce quality products, but also their rich cultural heritage through the pageantry of their music, their dances, and their songs that tell about their ancestral history. It was a magnificent demonstration of the spirit of the young nation of South Sudan.

Following the success of the First Agricultural Trade Fair, the Second Agricultural Trade Fair and Conference was planned from November 27–30, 2012. These dates were selected based on the availability of participants and products at harvest time and the fact that it did not conflict with national holidays or any other trade show in the region. The selected location was the same as for the 2011 Fair: Nyakuron Cultural Center in Juba. The theme of the fair was “Food Security is the Other Side of Human Security.” The 2012 fair lasted until December 1 because an additional day was decreed by the Minister of Agriculture in view of the extensive time spent at the Governors’ Conference that occurred at the same time as the fair.

In order to gradually build the capacity of MAFCRD and MARF to organize and implement the fair, The FARM Project deployed a consultant for three months. He worked hand in hand with executives and officers from the two ministries to make the Second Agricultural Trade Fair and Conference their own success.

B. SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE CONSULTANCY

1. Identify gaps in capacity of the fair implementation team. Lead recruitment of key team members.
2. Establish clear terms of reference for the fair’s Development Committee, Operational Committee, and Technical Committee, to ensure clarity in the line of supervision between tiers and delegation of authority needed to manage and implement the trade fair.
3. Lead marketing, promotional, and communications efforts to generate participation and attendance of the fair, both within and outside South Sudan.
4. Help MAFCRD track spending relative to the budget that was approved for implementation of the fair.
5. Establish modalities for tenders, contracts, procurement, and payment for the various activities and services associated with the fair in order to streamline the operations of the fair’s Implementation Team.
6. Lead all activities related to design and implementation of the trade fair. This included but was not limited to liaising extensively with MAFCRD and the various trade fair committees, providing technical support to pre-trade fair meetings and workshops, working with vendors, working with the venue management, identifying exhibitors, advising the trade fair committees on all aspects of venue layout and design, liaising with advertisers and sponsors, leading the FARM project long-term and short-term staff tasked with providing support to this event, and all other associated activities as needed.
7. Lead a follow-up workshop with MAFCRD and the various trade fair committees immediately following the event to discuss successes, challenges, and lessons learned for future trade fairs in South Sudan.

C. CONSULTANT DELIVERABLES

1. Implementation plan for MAFCRD to produce the fair, including clear roles and responsibilities for the key management team responsible for implementing the fair

2. Successful marketing, promotion, and communications for the trade fair, with delivery of key promotional products as determined in the course of the assignment
3. Successful implementation of the fair
4. Final report summarizing the South Sudan trade fair experience, including lessons learned, challenges, and successes, for use by MAFCRD in implementing future trade fairs



Some of the many products showcased at the fair

II. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

STRUCTURE OF THE FAIR

A. THE HIGH EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE

A High Executive Steering Committee was formed in August, several months before the opening day of the fair. The committee was to provide the leadership, guidance, and management required for the organization and implementation of the fair. This committee was made up only of MAFCRD and MARF executives (deputy ministers and under-secretaries). In September, the committee was co-chaired by the deputy ministers of MAFCRD and MARF. As time got closer to opening day (middle of October), the ministers themselves began to co-chair the committee.

Six operational sub-committees were created by the High Executive Steering Committee to carry out the groundwork to organize and implement the fair. These sub-committees enlisted members from other line ministries, such as the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Office of the President's Security and Protocol Units. A National Coordinator, Dr. Suzanna D. Deng, was also engaged by the committee to play an advisory and administrative role. She was given overall responsibility for fundraising.

B. THE OPERATIONAL SUB-COMMITTEES

Executive Sub-Committee

This committee was in charge of maintaining and fostering relationships and direct linkages with the different line ministries of the national government, the state governments, international donors, international NGOs, and other key government and private sector organizations. This sub-committee was also tasked with setting up policies and rules and regulations to facilitate the planning and implementation processes for the fair. It provided back-stopping and technical and operational support to the other sub-committees. This sub-committee was headed Mr. Timothy Thwol Onak, Director General of Forestry and Chairman of the High Executive Steering Committee.

Technical and Operations Sub-committee

This committee was in charge of securing the participation of local and foreign exhibitors, including registration (online and by other means) and payment of fair fees; setting up demonstration plots and animal exhibits; all matters related to the readiness and functioning of the venue infrastructure and facilities, including the fairgrounds; and all services to exhibitors before, during, and after the fair. This sub-committee was headed by Mr. Edward Laila Lomude, who became the *defacto* Grounds Manager during the fair.

Protocol Sub-committee

This committee was placed in charge of assisting international participants to obtain visitor visas for South Sudan. It was also responsible for facilitation of the customs process for the introduction of exhibit goods into the country, including logistical support to move the goods through customs and tax exemption letters. The Protocol Sub-committee also was tasked with organization of the opening and closing ceremonies and special events such as the innovation award and the management and maintenance of the VIP tent. It also handled the welcome desk at the airport to greet foreign participants and farmers and government officials from the different states of South Sudan. This sub-committee was headed by Dr. Lino Ananias from MAFCRD, who was later replaced by Ambassador Dominique Panther from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Logistics, Procurement and Services Sub-committee

This sub-committee was in charge of securing the venue and making it ready to host the fair, including ensuring that all required maintenance and repairs were made. It was also tasked with transport (to and around Juba) and hotel accommodations for local and foreign participants; the procurement of tents, booths, and other required furnishings; cleaning and sanitation services (portable toilets, garbage pick-up and disposal, recycling, etc.) for the venue facilities and fairgrounds during the event; assistance to participants in setting up and maintaining booths and stalls; securing the participation of the police band for the opening ceremony; and all security and emergency services such as police, fire brigade, the Red Cross, and the presence of an ambulance on stand-by to assist visitors and exhibitors in case of medical emergencies. This sub-committee was headed by Mr. Eliakimalzika Noti.

Communications and Media Sub-committee

This sub-committee was placed in charge of all advertising and promotion activities for the fair through mass media and other means, in order to ensure high attendance by visitors and exhibitors. Its main task was to make sure that participants and the public at large were informed about the fair and all related happenings before, during, and after the fair. This sub-committee was headed by Mr. Simon Ramkel, who was later replaced by Mr. Gabriel, the Communications Officer for MAFCRD.

Budget and Finance Sub-committee

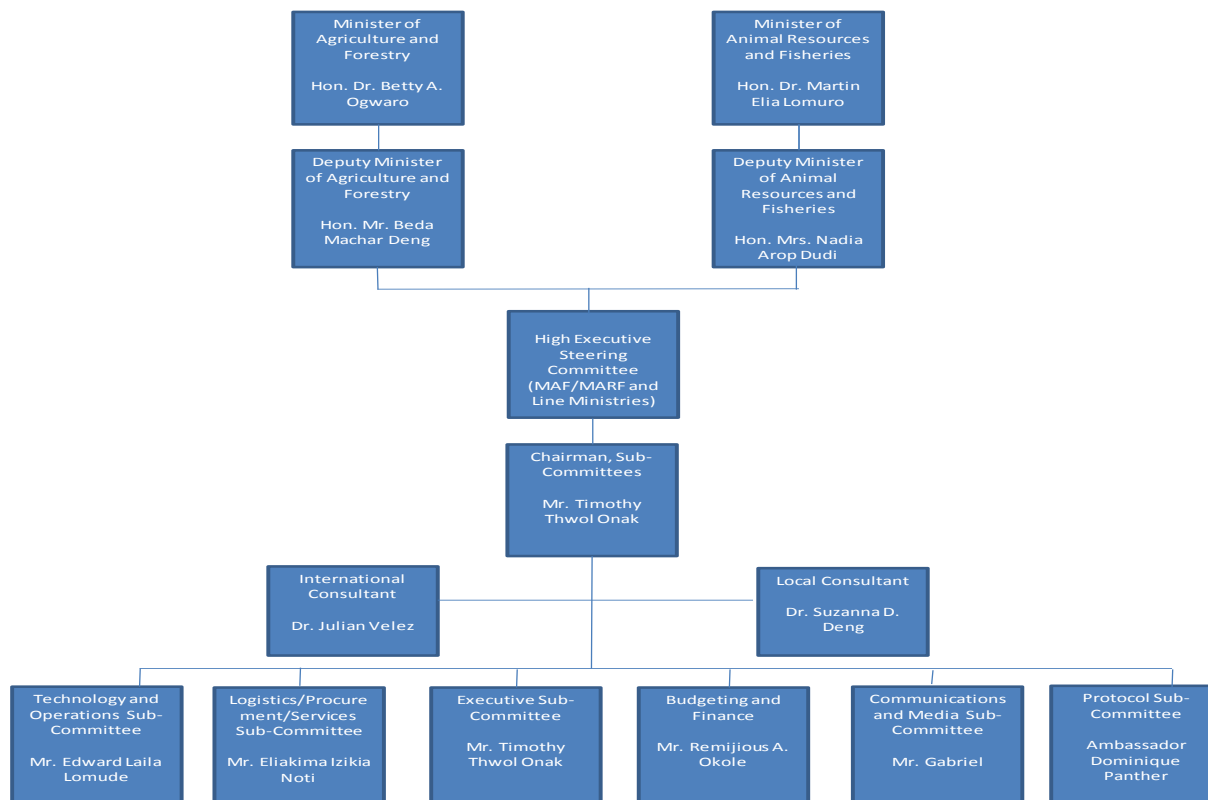
This sub-committee was in charge of all financial matters, such as budget preparation, bank accounts, disbursement of funds, the establishment of systems for financial control and accounting, and collection of revenue from registration fees and ticket sales. This sub-committee also spearheaded the effort to enlist financial sponsors for the fair, with support from the Executive Sub-committee. It was headed by Mr. Remijous A. Okole.

Organizing Team

The Organizing Team was made up of the international consultant provided by The FARM Project for the fair, the international consultant provided by the European Union for the conference, the National Coordinator and Local Advisor designated by the High Executive Steering Committee, and two local assistants. This team did all the planning for the fair and supported the different sub-committees in their implementation efforts. The two international consultants took the lead in the design and production of all communication materials used to promote and advertise the fair. The team operated from an office given by MAFCRD, which was in the ministry's projects building. The FARM Project provided logistical

support to the Organizing Team in the form of a printer, a scanner, and a copying machine. MAFCRD provided an additional printer and funds for office supplies and other materials required by the team.

Figure: Organization of the Second Agricultural Trade Fair and Conference



C. OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

In the second week of September, the consultant developed a work plan, with landmarks and deadlines, for every sub-committee. Based on this work plan, the sub-committees held an operations meeting every Saturday morning to review accomplishments, solve operational problems, and create a more detailed work plan for the following week. Specific assignments to be completed during the coming week were given to every sub-committee head. Afterwards, the consultant prepared a written weekly progress report and a work plan for the following week. The High Executive Steering Committee met every Wednesday to review the progress made by the operational sub-committees. Starting at the end of October, the High Executive Steering Committee participated in the Saturday operational meetings as well; thus, two weekly meetings were often held in the last weeks of preparation for the fair.

III. WORK PLAN FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAIR

As mentioned, every operational sub-committee had a work plan to implement by the middle of September. These work plans were prepared based on a checklist developed by the consultant. All tasks on the list were supposed to be accomplished by the different sub-committees in order to ensure the success of the fair. Each week, additional tasks that had been overlooked were added in the detailed work plan for the week.

CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAIR

Management

- a. An Agricultural Development Committee (High Executive Steering Committee) is to be appointed by MAFCRD to plan, implement and manage the fair.
- b. This committee should have an Executive Sub-Committee headed by the Chairman of the Development Committee.
- c. Some of the major tasks that need to be carried out by the Executive Sub-Committee include:
 - i. Set policy to facilitate the planning and implementation of the fair.
 - ii. Manage and assist the other sub-committees.
 - iii. Create linkages with and ensure cooperation and participation by other MAFCRD units.
 - iv. Create linkages with and ensure cooperation and participation by other line ministries and government entities, including state governments.
 - v. Enlist participation and sponsorship by international donors and other international organizations and NGOs.

Venue

- a. The selected location should be central or prominent and attractive, and linked to local transportation infrastructure.
- b. The venue has to be well-connected with the rest of the country and internationally.
- c. Well-known tourist centers that offer different types of attractions, entertainment, and events are good venue locations.
- d. A dry season climate is helpful to attract participants.
- e. Accommodations need to be available for large numbers of people (a large number of hotels).
- f. Partner hotels should be selected at least three months before the fair and good bulk booking rates for participants should be negotiated.

- g. It is important to select partner transportation providers (airlines, bus lines, trains, etc.) at least three months before the fair and negotiate good bulk booking rates for participants.
- h. Special arrangements need to be made with relevant government entities to facilitate foreign participants' entry into the country, as well as entry of their samples of produce, machinery, and equipment. Involvement should be secured by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (visas and entry requirements; visas on arrival for participants registered in advance), the Ministry of Health (samples of processed foods), MAFCRD (samples of fresh produce), and MARF (samples of livestock products).
- i. The actual site for the fair needs to be secured well in advance by signing a contract and paying a deposit.
- j. A detailed inspection of the site is required to evaluate needs and prepare a budget for the work.
- k. After the site is secured, it needs to be prepared to receive the participants by doing required maintenance (painting, plumbing, electricity, water, telephone lines, Internet access).

Participants and Visitors

- a. A central underlying theme should be chosen, based on a product or service or consumer requirement.
- b. The profile of participants to be recruited should match the central theme.
- c. Lists of participants should be secured from previous fairs or similar events, agricultural businesses, farmers' organizations, government entities, NGOs, etc.
- d. It is important to make a preliminary list of participants in the fair, provide them with relevant information about the fair, and solicit opinions and suggestions from them on what they would like to have included in the new fair.
- e. The list of participants should be finalized as early as possible, to invite as special guests or to recruit as sellers or buyers.
- f. A "sales package" should be prepared, made up of relevant and interesting information, for recruiters to attract participants.
- g. Planners should carry out recruitment activities such as personal visits by recruiters and well-designed e-mail campaigns (and make sure e-mails are read). Meetings should be organized with key local participants such as good farmers, well-known and successful companies, and other relevant individuals and organized groups in the public and private sectors.
- h. Early registration facilities should be offered, including through the Internet.
- i. Planners should offer incentives to increase attendance and recruit participants. These might include early payment discounts, group rates (for the fair, hotels, transportation, events, etc.), contests, opportunities to make presentations about products and services, daily raffles for items such as meals at good restaurants or tickets to local events and/or tourist attractions, field trips, innovation awards, and best booth awards related to the central theme of the fair.
- j. A registration desk should be organized at the venue site. The team should:
 - i. Select a strategic place for the registration desk before the entrance to the fair grounds.
 - ii. Staff at least three tables to receive registration forms and payment and hand out identification (ID) badges and registration packages.
 - iii. Hand out badges and registration packages to participants who registered in advance.
- k. Registration at the venue should be facilitated by providing ample space for participants to move about and enough registration tables and personnel to avoid large and tedious queues.
- l. Good-looking badges should be designed that are easy to read and contain information to allow interactions between participants (e.g., name, title, organization, country of origin, and products and/or services).
- m. A write-up on rules and regulations should be prepared for fair participants.

- n. An attractive registration package should be handed to participants after registration. It should include a souvenir portfolio bag with the markings and the logo of the fair; the agenda and time tables for the fair; a floor map of the venue, clearly showing emergency exits, wash rooms, first aid stations, and locations for customer service desks or service points; schedules and venues for special events; tickets for pre-paid or free-of-charge events; tickets for raffles and/or contests (which could be handed out on a daily basis as well); information on where to eat and places to visit; security tips; a map of the city or parts of the city; and special instructions, rules, and regulations.

Communications and Media

- a. At least six months in advance, planners should make sure all interested persons and entities know the fair is being organized and will take place.
- b. It is important to make sure all kinds of media are available (print, radio, TV, Internet) to publicize the event—before, during, and after.
- c. A web site should be designed and uploaded to promote the fair on the Internet and provide information to participants about the country and the fair. Registration materials and instructions on how to register should be included together with information on hotels and other relevant matters.
- d. A logo and a seal should be designed based on the central theme of the fair.
- e. Messages need to be produced and delivered.
 - i. Radio messages
 - ✓ Get quotations from different radio stations on cost of airing messages.
 - ✓ Choose the most convenient station.
 - ✓ Produce and test messages.
 - ✓ Deliver messages to chosen station to be aired.
 - ✓ Monitor the airing of messages.
 - ii. Newspaper messages
 - ✓ Get quotations from different newspapers on cost of publishing messages.
 - ✓ Choose most convenient newspaper option.
 - ✓ Develop newspapers messages.
 - ✓ Deliver draft messages to newspaper for publication.
 - ✓ Monitor the publication of messages.
 - iii. Marketing materials
 - ✓ Design marketing materials for different purposes.
 - ✓ Obtain approval for designed materials.
 - ✓ Get quotations for printing the different materials.
 - ✓ Have materials printed.
 - ✓ Distribute materials to targeted recipients.
 - ✓ Set up banners, billboards, and lamppost in selected places to maximize impact.
 - iv. Exhibitors' package
 - ✓ Determine materials to put in packages.
 - ✓ Procure different materials.
 - ✓ Put together packages.
 - ✓ Get quotations for printing the packages.
 - ✓ Print different packages.
 - v. Directory of exhibitors
 - ✓ Gather information as participants register.
 - ✓ Obtain quotations on cost of printing the directory.
 - ✓ Have directory printed.

- f. Testimonials from satisfied participants and visitors to previous fairs should be used to attract new participants.
- g. Word-of-mouth advertising should be pursued as an effective means to promote attendance at the fair.

Budgeting and Finance

- a. The budget for the fair should be prepared in accordance with government and donor requirements. Most donors like itemized budgets that allow them to choose the items to finance.
- b. It is important to organize a bookkeeping system to record the revenues accrued and the expenses incurred in the development and implementation of the fair.
- c. All payments and other revenues for the fair need to be collected.
- d. Planners should organize ticket sales for visitors, including printing two kinds of tickets—one for general visitors and another for dignitaries.
- e. Advance registration payment facilities should be set up for participants registering in advance online or by other means.
- f. Endorsements and/or sponsorships should be pursued from different public and private sector organizations and individuals. Planners should write letters requesting sponsorships, hand deliver them to potential sponsors, and follow up as much as required. Sponsors might include:
 - i. International donors
 - ii. Local governments
 - iii. Private sector local and international organizations/companies
 - iv. Trade associations
 - v. Chambers of Commerce
 - vi. Guilds or similar collective entities

Logistics and Preparations

(Logistics need to be well thought-out and prepared in advance.)

- a. A floor plan layout needs to be designed for the exhibition area, making sure crowd access and flow are smooth and booths have ample space. Grounds should also be attractive to participants and visitors.
- b. Participants should be assisted to set up their booths at the fairgrounds
- c. Transport facilities should be organized for foreign participants to get to and from the venue. Plans should cover routes to the airports, hotels, and special outings (restaurants, landmarks, etc.). Partner hotels should be encouraged to offer their own transportation services to move participants to and from the airport and the fair venue.
- d. Accommodations need to be secured for local participants from the different states in partner hotels. It is important to make sure negotiated discounted bulk rates are applied.
- e. It is important to organize transport for local participants to and from their place of origin and between their accommodations and the venue.
- f. A comprehensive customer service function should be implemented, including conveniently located help desks or service points spread around the venue, as well as personnel to guide visitors or help them out in any way.
- g. There should be ample security in and around the venue, at the airport, at the hotels, and in other places where participants may congregate.
- h. A first aid booth needs to be set up.
- i. Emergency procedures need to be planned for vacating the venue safely in case of fire, earthquakes, floods, etc.

- j. An emergency logistics committee needs to be set up to provide emergency assistance to participants as needed (booth preparation; malfunctions of utilities, machinery and equipment; minor repairs; industrial accidents, etc.).
- k. The grounds and other facilities (such as rest rooms) need to be kept clean and sanitary.

Business Center and Business Match-Making Sessions

- a. It is important to set up a center to provide business and communication services to participants, including match-making sessions. The center should have ample space to accommodate office equipment and tables and chairs for meetings scheduled by interested participants. Common office equipment to have on hand includes desktop computers (three or four), a printer, a scanner, a copy machine, and a fax machine hooked to a telephone line. Office supplies such as printing paper, printer cartridges, clips, post-it notes, staplers, and tape should also be on hand.
- b. The business center should be manned by at least two or three people to ensure assistance to participants is provided before, during, and after business match-making sessions, in addition to the other more clerical services.

Innovation Contest

(An innovation award is given by a judging committee to the booth that adheres the closest to the general theme of the fair.)

- a. The judging committee needs to be selected and appointed.
- b. The judging committee should be assisted to define criteria for determining adherence to the general theme of the fair.
- c. Sponsorship for the award (prizes) should be obtained.
- d. An internal awards ceremony needs to be organized to give out the award on the last afternoon of the fair. The recipient should receive a certificate and the sponsored prizes.

Welcome Desk at Airport

(International participants will be coming to the fair mostly by air. They will require orientation and assistance upon arrival. For this purpose, a welcome desk should be set up at the airport to operate one day before and two days into the fair. This desk should be manned by one or two members of the Protocol Committee)

- a. Planners need to obtain permission from the immigration, customs, and airport authorities to allow the desk to be set up inside the arrival area at the airport.
- b. Staff assigned to work at the desk need to be selected and trained.
- c. Furniture needs to be procured and fair promotional materials gathered to set up the desk.
- d. The desk should be set up in the arrival area of the airport.

VIP Tent on Fair Grounds

(Dignitaries from local and foreign governments, as well as other VIPs, will visit the fair throughout the duration of the event. They will need a place to rest and refresh during their visit. They may also wish to meet with different participants. A VIP tent should be set up on the fairgrounds to assist and comfort these VIP visitors.)

- a. Planners should locate a central place on the grounds of the fair suitable for the VIP tent.

- b. A good-sized tent and tables and chairs need to be procured to furnish the tent.
- c. A member of the Protocol Sub-committee should be selected and trained to man the tent at all times.
- d. Planners should cater out finger foods such as small pastries and fruits and water and other refreshments to have available for the VIPs every day.

Appropriate Technology

(The fair should feature appropriate (simple) technologies used by farmers in the different regions of the country. A section of the grounds of the fair should be set aside for this purpose.)

- a. The technologies to be featured need to be selected by working together with the agricultural officers of the states.
- b. Planners should arrange for transportation of related small machines and equipment to and from the fair grounds. It is important to make sure they arrive two days before the opening of the fair.

Opening and Closing Ceremonies

- a. A venue inside the fair complex should be selected to hold the opening and closing ceremonies.
- b. Planners should prepare the agenda and select the speakers for both events.
- c. A master of ceremonies needs to be identified for each event.
- d. A short cultural show should be performed during both events.
- e. A seating area in front of the podium and/or stage needs to be selected for featured speakers to sit and wait to speak.
- f. A podium and other furnishings need to be procured.
- g. A good sound system needs to be in place and in good operating condition.
- h. A sound technician needs to be on standby to address any sound problems that may arise.

Demonstration Plots

(Demonstration plots at the fair will feature crops and technologies that are of interest to farmers or that are innovative in nature and can be applied locally.)

- a. The layout of the plots should be designed according to the floor map of the exhibit area and the space assigned for this purpose.
- b. The selected greenhouse should be installed on the demo site.
- c. A low-cost drip irrigation system should be installed.
- d. Fruit trees, ornamental plants, and any other identified fruits or vegetables should be transplanted according to the layout.
- e. Vegetable seeds need to be procured and nurseries created to produce seedlings for transplanting vegetables to be grown in the greenhouse, as well as for horticultural crops in the demonstration plots.



A demonstration of new technology

- f. A cropping model, made up of random crop varieties, needs to be established.
- g. The cropping models should be displayed on the grounds according to a landscaping plan.
- h. Experts need to be engaged who can continuously explain all the technologies that have been implemented on the demo plots.
- i. Exhibitors who sell machinery should be identified. They should be invited to display the latest technology available in the country near the demo plot area.



Maize featured at the fair

IV. CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED DURING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PLAN

This was the second year for the agricultural trade fair and there were significant improvements in its organization. That said, continuing improvements need to be sustained if the fair is to become a leading mechanism to highlight the agricultural potential of South Sudan.

A. FUNDING

The major issue in organizing and implementing the fair was the matter of funding. With the government under a system of austerity due to lack of oil revenue, MAFCRD was largely dependent upon external donors to support the activity. Although significant efforts were made to secure support from both international donors and local and regional private sector partners, funding only began to be disbursed in the middle of October, about 30 days prior to the start of the fair. Crucial campaigns such as advertising were, in turn, delayed due to lack of availability of funds. The funds that were available had complex procedures for their release and management, with many rules and regulations having to be fulfilled to complete a transaction.

In order to take responsibility for implementation of the fair, MAFCRD managed all financial matters and made all major decisions concerning the fair. These measures made it challenging for the Organizing Team to solve problems related to procurement of goods and services, particularly since many activities were late due to the late start in organizing the fair. At one point, it became very difficult to complete deals with providers because advance payments were delayed.

B. PARTICIPANT LOGISTICS

Several plans were carefully prepared to efficiently bring farmers to and from the fair in the most cost-effective way. This plan was designed to minimize the hotel time required in Juba for visiting farmers and state officials. It was based on a combination of flights provided by the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and flights chartered from a private company. This combination was required because of the lack of UNMISS service to places such as Aweil, Kwajok, and Wau; it facilitated the mobilization of personnel by avoiding in-bound and out-going overnight layovers for passengers in other cities. The plan also offered a comfortable flexibility to manage dates, times, and passenger identities when returning visitors to their places of origin. In the end, farmers and state officials were only transported by UNMISS on their scheduled flights. As a result, hotel days in Juba were extended and in-bound and out-going overnight layovers took place. In addition, the Organizing Team was subjected to a great deal of duress in making last-minute changes to passenger identities and dates and times for many visitors' return trips.

The Governor's Conference, which ran at the same time as the fair, impacted the implementation of the fair as well. Due to this conference, high-level executives from MAFCRD and MARF were absent. They had to make decisions without knowing the situation on the ground or without input from the organizing team. For example, at one point the closing ceremony was cancelled and then reinstated at the last minute. The Organizing Team had to scramble to put together a program right before the event took place.

C. THE SUB-COMMITTEES

In general, roles, expectations of the roles and responsibilities of each sub-committee were often unclear. Sub-committees heavily relied on the consultants and other members of the Organizing Team to perform functions. This often resulted in tasks not being completed in a timely manner.

Budget and Finance Sub-committee

As mentioned before, the Budget and Finance Sub-committee, in addition to preparing the fair budget and managing all financial and accounting matters, was in charge of collecting money from participant registration and ticket sales to the general public. Income from registration fees amounted to 13,196 SSP (\$4,257). All registration fees were collected by the Organizing Team on behalf of the Budget and Finance Sub-committee in order to provide participants with a one-stop registration and payment shop. Ticket sales were better than planned. Visitors purchased 5,000 tickets from November 28 to 30. This means attendance by the general public exceeded 5,000, since entrance fees were not charged on the first day (November 27) and the last day (December 1) of the fair.

Communications and Media Sub-committee

The design and production of advertising materials (flyers, posters, banners, and billboards) were completed very late due to lack of available funds and the complex disbursement procedures in place. These materials were supposed to be displayed around Juba the first week of November and were only placed the week before the opening of the fair. The mass media advertising campaign (TV, radio, and newspapers) was also delayed until the last week before the fair. Newspaper advertising was deemed expensive and was cancelled. Newspaper coverage, in general, was also absent from the fair.

An assessment of the publicity to attract visitors from the general public to the fair is that the effort to advertise was not effective, since the promotional efforts were done very late and they did not have an impact on attendance by the general public. Exhibitors and other participants noticed this publicity short-coming and complained about a lack of visitors' traffic through their booths and stalls.

The printing of the fair program was significantly affected by the merging of the Governor's Conference with the Agricultural Conference. The agenda for the Agricultural Conference was supposed to be included in the fair program, but due to the merging of events it underwent numerous changes that took place too late to allow the fair program to be printed on time.

Logistics and Operations Sub-committees

The application of the carefully designed plans for the layout and numbering of booths and stalls did not take place. A wedding was allowed to occupy the fairgrounds by the management of the rented venue on the Saturday before the opening of the fair. This meant that set up was not possible until the Sunday before the fair. The space that was originally planned to be available had to be reduced. The length of the planned blocks of booths and stalls in the central section of the fairgrounds had to be reduced to fit the available terrain, and alley ways had to be narrowed to fit the total number of exhibition spaces.

needed for the registered participants. In addition, areas on the perimeter section had to be shortened on the west side and lengthened on the east side to reach the required numbers. All these changes had to take place in two days (a half day Sunday, all day Monday, and a half day Tuesday, the opening day). Booth numbering was further affected by the states' booths being moved to one side of the fairground. The consequence was that the numbering of booths and stalls collapsed and chaos ensued on the day before opening and on the opening day. At the end, available spaces were occupied by exhibitors on a "first-come, first-serve" basis. Fortunately, by the afternoon of the second day all exhibitors had their own spaces and were relatively happy.



Stalls with various types of produce

The setting up of tents, booths, and stalls was severely hindered by the unexpected wedding and the delays in the procurement of the booths. Because of these events, there was no time to prepare and make sure layout plans were actually followed on the ground. In addition, Nyakuron management was insufficiently prepared to host such an event as large as this fair. There were not enough tables to furnish all the booths and stalls, and the venue did not carry chairs and tables directly to stalls and booths. They just opened the storage area for participants to secure and carry their own furnishings, which meant that some participants were unable to secure the basic amenities for their displays.

During the fair, no grounds management took place except for garbage pickup. Parking was extremely difficult. Traffic control and guidance to vehicles to access the available parking areas away from the fairgrounds was absent. As a result, cars were allowed to enter and park on space allocated to exhibitors and fair activities, taking up precious space reserved for the free movement of visitors and for the entertainment program. Furthermore, cars parked on fairgrounds obstructed direct views of booths and stalls, limiting the exposure exhibitors had to the general public.

Services to exhibitors—such as food and beverages, ample toilet facilities, information and assistance desks, assistance setting up and furnishing booths and stalls, and maintenance of emergency response services—were also absent. Participants loudly complained about these inadequacies in the final survey.

Participants also complained about a lack of security at the venue, especially at night. Several robberies were reported and compensation had to be paid to those affected.

Protocol Sub-committee

International participants had difficulties obtaining entry permits for South Sudan. These difficulties were exacerbated by the short notice given to the Organizing Team about their arrival and visa requirements. In addition, tax exemption letters were issued late. A week or so before the opening day, the procedural steps to request tax exemption for goods to be displayed at the fair were still not known, including the identification of the different government offices involved. After the opening ceremony, the Protocol Sub-committee had to attend the Governors' Conference. As a result, no planning and execution for the innovation award and the VIP tent took place, and the organization of the closing ceremony was left to the Organizing Team.

The Organization Team

The Organization Team had a very tight and small office, few resources such as computers and printers, and a great deal of pressure from implementers on their scarce resources and work time.



Participants and produce at the fair

V. FULFILLMENT OF THE SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES BY THE CONSULTANT

A. SCOPE OF WORK

1. Identify gaps in capacity of the fair implementation team, and lead recruitment of key team members.

All members of committees and sub-committees were selected before the arrival of the consultant. However, he recognized weaknesses in the selected personnel, and was instrumental in assisting MAFCRD and MARF to make the required personnel changes.

2. Establish clear terms of reference for the fair Development Committee, the Operational Committee, and the Technical Committee, to ensure clarity in the line of supervision between tiers and delegation of authority needed to manage and implement the trade fair.

Chapter II of this report deals extensively with the overall organizational structure of the fair and the terms of reference for all committees and sub-committees involved in the organization and implementation of the fair.

3. Lead marketing, promotional, and communications efforts to generate participation and attendance at the fair both within and outside South Sudan.

Also mentioned in Chapter II of this report was the fact that the international consultants (sponsored by The FARM Project and the European Union) took the lead in the design and production of all marketing, promotional, and communications efforts.

4. Help MAFCRD track spending relative to the budget that was approved for implementation of the fair.

The consultant developed financial models to assist MAFCRD and MARF with the project and track spending, with special emphasis on USAID funding. The consultant also developed a cash flow report for the Budget and Finance Sub-committee to use to report income and expenses on a weekly basis.

5. Establish modalities for tenders, contracts, procurement, and payment for the various activities and services associated with the fair in order to streamline the operations of the fair's implementation team.

The consultant participated in the vast majority of the procurement efforts made by MAFCRD, including contracts. He was instrumental in assisting MAFCRD to minimize the use of contracts in favor of purchase orders to streamline RSS procurement requirements.

6. Lead all activities related to design and implementation of the trade fair. This included but was not limited to liaising extensively with MAFCRD and the various trade fair committees, providing technical support to pre-trade fair meetings and workshops, working with vendors, working with the venue management, identifying exhibitors, advising the trade fair committees on all aspects of venue layout and design, liaising with advertisers and sponsors, leading The FARM long-term and short-term staff tasked with providing support to this event, and all associated activities as needed.

The consultant was recognized by MAFCRD, MARF, USAID, the European Union, and The FARM Project as the leader of all activities related to the design and implementation of the fair. He interacted with all operational sub-committees on a daily basis, providing technical support in all meetings and workshops leading to the fair. He also worked extensively with vendors and the management of the venue, and helped recruit local and international exhibitors. Additionally, he advised MAFCRD and MARF sub-committees on venue layout and design and was the custodian for all layout plans for the placement and location of booths and stalls. He dealt with advertisers and sponsors and led The FARM Project staff tasked with supporting the event and all associated activities.

7. Lead a follow-up workshop with MAFCRD and the various trade fair committees immediately following the event to discuss successes, challenges, and lessons learned for future trade fairs in South Sudan.

The level of effort for the consultant was increased by two person-days to allow him to lead the follow-up workshop to evaluate the success of the implementation of the fair. This workshop was scheduled well in advance to take place on December 4. It was organized by the National Coordinator herself. On the target date, however, MAFCRD postponed the workshop for one week, indicating that implementers required more time to process success stories, the challenges encountered, and the lessons learned. Upon learning of this decision by MAFCRD, the consultant concentrated on analyzing the results of the exit surveys conducted with exhibitors.

B. DELIVERABLES

1. Implementation plan for MAFCRD to produce the fair, including clear roles and responsibilities for the key management team responsible for implementing the fair

Chapter II describes the roles and responsibilities of the key operational sub-committees tasked with the organization and implementation of the fair. Chapter III is devoted to the work plans designed by the consultant to facilitate the work of these operational sub-committees.

2. Successful marketing, promotion, and communications for the trade fair, with delivery of key promotional products as determined in course of the assignment

Chapter IV, under the section on the Communications and Media Sub-committee, describes the limitations of the communications effort to effectively promote and advertise the fair, caused by delays in disbursement of funds.

3. Successful implementation of the fair

Indicators for fair success varied significantly. During the first meeting to introduce the consultant after his arrival, USAID officers defined success by stating the 2012 fair had to be “at least equal or better than last year.” In one USAID internal communication dealing with USAID’s purchase order to MAFCRD to implement the fair, the success of the fair was defined as having at least 50 booths and/or stalls, an inaugural ceremony, and at least 500 attendees. On both counts, the 2012 fair was superior. The fair was opened by His Excellency the President of the Republic of South Sudan, and the Ambassador of the United States of America was a key speaker at the inaugural ceremony. The table below shows a comparison:

Table: Comparison of 2011 Fair and 2012 Fair

INDICATOR	2011 FAIR	2012 FAIR
Number of local and international exhibitors	110	113
Number of booths/stalls	104	190
Number of participants		1,750 (ID badges issued to different participants)
Visitors	2,500	More than 5,000
Students	800	20 secondary schools
Sponsored farmers	213 (FARM project farmers)	90 farmers/9 from each state

4. Final report summarizing the South Sudan trade fair experience, including lessons learned, challenge, and successes, for use by MAFCRD in implementing future trade fairs

The final report is comprised of the six chapters included in this document.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. CONCLUSIONS

The fair was implemented successfully, as evidenced by indicators and the satisfaction of participants expressed in the exit survey. However, the organization and implementation effort still has room for improvement if the fair is to become an annual, international, “must-attend” happening in the East Africa Region.

B. LESSONS LEARNED

- More time is necessary to organize the fair in order to engage sponsors early and complete tasks to secure a venue, recruit local and international participants, select attending farmers, promote and advertise the event, organize special events, and provide the services required to satisfy expectations and demands from exhibitors and other participants.
- Government officials temporarily posted as implementers need to acquire capacity in leadership, commitment, self-reliance, and a sense of ownership for the fair. They must also be willing to carry out tasks at all times as required.
- Sufficient funding, disbursed at the right time, must be available at all times to ensure a successful fair, especially for financing timely, effective promotional and advertising campaigns to attract fair exhibitors and visitors in good numbers. Government financial rules need to be flexible to allow organization of the fair to run smoothly.
- Logistical support such as computers, printers, copying machines, scanners, transportation, office space, office materials and supplies must be made available to implementers at all times.
- A more secure, private, and spacious venue is required, with adequate facilities and ample parking.
- Sufficient time must be allocated to the layout and placement of tents, booths, and stalls and to other ground preparation activities.
- Preparation to set up demonstration plots and animal exhibits must begin at least six months in advance of the opening day.
- Food and beverage offerings, as well as information and assistance desks, must be located in strategic places within the fairgrounds.
- Sanitation facilities, with required utilities such as water, must be made available in sufficient numbers.
- Many participants suggested increasing the duration of the fair to a week to have more visitors attending in order for exhibitors to have a better opportunity to do business. In fact, the 2012 fair was extended one day by MAFCRD. The minister herself came up with this idea during the final debriefing with the consultant prior to his departure. There are pros and cons for a longer-lasting fair. The main considerations are that (1) the implementation cost for a longer fair will be

much higher, and (2) all the services to meet participants' needs and those related to maintaining the venue and facilities in good operating condition would have to be expanded.

- Even if the time frame is not increased, the fair should include at least one weekend to allow the working general public in Juba and nearby counties to visit the fair over the weekend with their families. With this in mind, a wider variety of family entertainment needs to be included.
- The results of the exit survey of participants included more than 70 tips from participants for improving the fair.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- An independent organization (such as a foundation) attractive to potential sponsors such as international donors, NGOs, and private corporations should be created to organize and implement the fair. Such an organization would include participation by some RSS ministries and units as part of an overall management team.
- A permanent venue should be secured for the fair to ensure privacy, security, sanitation, and comfort. Ample space must be available to set up permanent booths and stalls and to build adequate facilities and parking spaces.
- A year-round operation is required by the new organization to be able to successfully organize and implement the fair, especially to secure sufficient funding and recruit local and international participants. To complete all required tasks, the new organization must be adequately funded all year.
- The new organization must also be dedicated to working with the different states of South Sudan in order to assist them to organize and implement their own state fairs and to train farmers and other private sector entities on how to improve their exhibitions and displays to attract potential partners and investors during the national fair.
- A third mandate for the new organization should be to promote agricultural development and investment within the country by the local and international private sectors, to achieve and maintain food security for the young nation, and to eventually create a private export sector capable of sustained economic growth, including creating additional jobs and opportunities for the local rural population, especially women and youth.
- To make this organization a reality, support must be secured from international donors and NGOs to engage an international consultant to design and implement a blueprint for the successful launch and sustainable operation of the new entity.
- There is already much to be done for the 2013 fair. For this purpose, it is strongly recommended that MAFCRD and MARF maintain the local members of the organizing team as an operational group going forward. They should form the core group that will spearhead the implementation of the interventions necessary for a successful 2013 fair.